

Kansas

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VIGILANT GUARD

Kansas 2014



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On the Cover

A variety of training scenarios were visually captured by members of the 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment during Vigilant Guard 2014, a multi-state emergency response exercise hosted by the Kansas National Guard, Aug. 4-7. *Photo illustration by Capt. Michael Sullivan, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.*

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FROM THE COMMANDER



Greetings, men and women of the Kansas Army National Guard. As we prepare to close out yet another successful year of individual and collective training, I want to thank you for your hard work and continued focus on safety and risk management.

Some extraordinary events occurred this year, one of the largest being our hosting of the U.S. Northern Command Vigilant Guard exercise. It was a great opportunity to directly interact in the field with all of our state emergency response agencies as well as multistate and active duty partners. Guardsmen from Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma participated as we exercised standing emergency management assistance agreements. These are neighbors that we would assist if called upon. There was a lot of networking and new relationships established which will be critical to our response in the future during a significant disaster or incident.

It was also an opportunity for the state to stand up their designated Joint Task Force headquarters, the 35th Infantry Division. The division responded in force, activating "Task Force Santa Fe" and quickly getting people, processes and systems in place and into play. Interestingly, the JTF became a truly joint organization with senior leadership from both the Air Guard and active duty Air Force serving as Title 32 and Title 10 deputy commanders. Even the Coast Guard was represented in the JTF. An impressive array of technology and capabilities were put into play by many different organizations, capabilities that will greatly benefit our response to the citizens of our state should we need to do so.

The exercise scenarios depicted large-scale disaster events in rapid-fire succession. The op-tempo was fast paced, and the conditions in the field were hot and challenging, especially to those who worked in protective gear. Yet it was all done safely without accident or injury.

Kudos to all who participated in the planning and/or execution. It was an excellent event from start to finish, and we now stand ready, more so than ever before, to provide for the safety, security and well-being of the citizens of our state.

As always, I appreciate everything you do. Be safe out there.

Very Respectfully,

Robert Windham

Brig. Gen. Robert Windham
Kansas Army National Guard Commander
Assistant Adjutant General-Army



Spc. James Barron, firefighter with the 181st Engineer Detachment Firefighting Team, Nebraska Army National Guard, guides ropes to extract victims from an elevator shaft during Vigilant Guard 2014, a joint exercise hosted by the Kansas National Guard, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4. The pulley system allows the Soldiers to raise the load with half the effort, but they must maintain a balance between the two cords to ensure safety. *Photo by Spc. Anna Laurin, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

Skillful teamwork makes high ropes exercise a success

By Spc. Anna Laurin
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Not all military training is for a direct company mission, which is exactly the type of training the Soldiers of the Nebraska Army National Guard were doing in an extraction drill during Vigilant Guard 2014, an exercise hosted by the Kansas National Guard at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4 2014.

The 632nd Vertical Engineer Company assembled teams to practice their rope-handling skills in a drill designed to prepare the Soldiers in rescuing actual victims in a real disaster.

“Our exercise today was to extract three victims out of an elevator shaft,” said Sgt. John Langley, carpentry and masonry specialist. “We were focused on how to hook up a proper rope system to successfully rescue victims.”

Handling ropes and rescuing civilians is not a common opportunity for all members of the 632nd.

“We only do this type of training two, or three times a year,” said Langley. “Practicing with the ropes on the drill floor and tying knots was a lot of the preparation we did for this exercise.”

The teams are made up of different elements, like firefighters, who are attached to the engineers as to assist during these exercises and actual emergency situations.

“They practice handling the ropes a lot more than we do,” said Langley. “They are more proficient.”

Although not all of the Soldiers work with rescue skills on a first-line mission, they understand how important the training is.

“Becoming more proficient in our search and extraction skills is very important,” said Langley. “It’s our job stateside and, when we come out here to train, we just get better and better at it.”

Overall, the mission was a success and the team leader was very happy with the teamwork his Soldiers put forth.

“The team did great,” said Langley. “The teamwork was fantastic. Everyone worked together and had great communication. This was probably one of the best rope missions I’ve been on.”



Sgt. Dave Hampton, plumber with the 632nd Vertical Engineer Company, Nebraska Army National Guard, is being extracted from an elevator shaft during Vigilant Guard 2014, a joint exercise hosted by the Kansas National Guard at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4. The Soldiers are lowered into the shaft via a rope and pulley system to help secure the victims into a Sked Rescue System, which helps raise them to safety. *Photo by Spc. Anna Laurin, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

USNORTHCOM commander visits Kansas



Gen. Charles H. Jacoby Jr., commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, visits with role player Miranda Gallagher, Inman, Kansas, and Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Frisell, 754th Chemical Company, Nebraska Army National Guard, during Vigilant Guard 2014 hosted by the Kansas National Guard at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4. In the scenario, injured role players went through a decontamination process following a simulated disaster. *Photo by Capt. Michael Sullivan, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

By Capt. Michael Sullivan
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Gen. Charles H. Jacoby, Jr., commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, visited the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina, Kansas, to observe training at Vigilant Guard 2014 Aug. 4.

Vigilant Guard is a large-scale, multi-state disaster response exercise sponsored by USNORTHCOM and the National Guard Bureau with a goal of testing the capabilities of emergency response agencies at all levels of government, both military and civilian.

Jacoby said exercises like Vigilant Guard are important to all involved

because these types of scenarios are complicated and involve lots of components.

"To be able to come together and get to know each other and learn what each organization brings to the table is critical," said Jacoby. "Exercises and training equals preparedness (which) equals readiness for the defense support for civil authorities."

More than 2,000 local, state and federal personnel are taking part over the course of the exercise. The exercise is taking place at several locations in the state, including Crisis City, Fort Riley, Overland Park, Salina, Topeka, Wichita and the Smoky Hill Weapons Range outside of Salina.

After being briefed and visiting with Soldiers and Airmen assigned to Joint

Task Force Santa Fe, Jacoby observed and interacted with first responders and volunteer role players who were participating in a collapsed structure venue and the subsequent hazmat response at Crisis City. JTF Santa Fe is comprised of service members from the 35th Infantry Division and 190th Air Refueling Wing.

"I loved what I saw out here," said Jacoby. "I saw lots of units from different places working with first responders. For USNORTHCOM, we spend a big part of our training budget to support Vigilant Guard exercises. For me to see the value that comes from each one of those dollars like this encourages me and makes me feel like we have the right priorities. It is terrific. My hat is off to the Kansas leadership for sponsoring this."

Leadership tours, sees benefits of Vigilant Guard

By Spc. Anna Laurin
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

To understand the over all benefits of Vigilant Guard 2014 hosted by Kansas, one must see all the moving parts and corresponding collaborations that make up the exercises valuable and successful. Maj. Gen. Lee Tapanelli, the adjutant general, Kansas National Guard, and other leadership from nearby states took a tour through the ins and outs of the large-scale exercise at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 5.

The leaders saw how Crisis City was able to hold such an event and how the Kansas Army National Guard organized and brought together so many entities from across the nation.

"Crisis City has been phenomenal as a venue for this kind of exercise," said Tapanelli. "This being the first time that we've been able to do a good national level exercise and bring this number of folks, it has been very good."

The venue not only supported various state Guard units but also local first responders from the region, which interacted with both Army Guardsmen and Air Guardsmen.

"We have units from Missouri, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Iowa, as well as USNORTHCOM here," said Tapanelli. "This really works well for our local responders, as well as our state partners, to begin to work with some other states and how do we go through JRSOI or joint reception staging and onward integration."

Vigilant Guard was such a large-scale exercise, that the event gave opportunity for many interactions between all of the entities.

"The biggest benefit from doing something like this, where you have everyone alongside each other working together, is that gain of familiarity," said Tapanelli. "This exercise gives them the opportunity where they can be out there working together so that when we do have a real world exercise it's not the first time that they have met each other."

The local responder teams and community emergency management officials also recognized how beneficial the Vigilant Guard has been for their own organizations.

"It's been really nice to see the interaction, especially for my local folks, to maybe help understand the processes that go into play," said Hannah Stambaugh, director of emergency management for Saline County.

At a local level, Stambaugh's organization saw opportunities to better their emergency preparation plans almost immediately.

"Our exercise hadn't even started yet and already we had improvement ideas for just our emergency operation center," said Stambaugh. "It's been very eye-opening, but a great, great learning experience."

Guard Soldiers and Airmen work together to make disaster exercise a success

By Capt. Kevin Anderson
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

"Like a hurricane" was the motto of the Joint Reception Staging Onward Integration, or JRSOI, team at the Kansas National Guard's Vigilant Guard 2014, Aug. 4-7, emergency preparedness exercise, according to Army Maj. Courtney Prewitt.

Looking at the numbers, his assessment of the situation is not far off the mark. Over the course of three days, a joint unit of Army, Air Force and civilian personnel successfully in-processed 456 service members. The Soldiers and Airmen flowed in from all over Kansas and four surrounding states to Salina to test and hone their skills in response to a variety of simulated natural disasters.

For the primary planning, officers of the JRSOI included Prewitt, Air Force Maj. Penny Jamvold and Capt. Richelle Shannonhouse, and they pleased with how well their respective services worked together to accomplish the complex mission of personnel accountability and in-processing.

"Really, the best and most successful part of the entire operation has been the 'joint' aspect," said Jamvold.

"Joint" refers to any operation that includes more than one branch of the United States military in a single operation.

Shannonhouse echoed the sentiment that the Army and Air Force truly came together during the exercise to create a seamless operation for checking service members in and performing accountability, briefing them on the exercise and sending them back to their units ready to begin training.

All of the officers admitted that there was some hesitancy during the initial planning phases of the operation.


"There were a lot of personnel changes throughout the yearlong planning process, and the different acronyms used by the Army and Air Force led to some initial confusion," Jamvold said. "But through all of our dedicated efforts, Vigilant Guard has been a resounding success when it comes to personnel accountability."

"Throughout the entire check-in process, we have not had a single unit wait more than one hour from the time they walk through the flight line door to when they are leaving, ready to begin their training mission," said Prewitt.

All three of the primary planning officers acknowledged that this operation would not be successful without the dedicated efforts of not only their Soldiers and Airmen, but their civilian counterparts at the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, or KDEM, as well.

"KDEM provided a lot of useful guidance and were very helpful to ensure all civilians involved in the exercise were properly accounted for during their arrival in Salina," Prewitt stated.

AMERICA'S



Members of the 623rd Vertical Engineers out of Wahoo, Nebraska, prepare to lower Senior Airman Johnathon Zgainer 155th Medical Group, Air Force medic out of Lincoln, Nebraska during confined space training at Vigilant Guard, hosted by the Kansas National Guard, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas. Confined-space rescue is the most likely disaster to face a CERFP team in the field. *Photos by Spc. Robert Havens, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

RESCUERS DOWN UNDER

The background image shows three rescue workers in military-style uniforms, including helmets and high-visibility vests, standing on a pile of rubble. They are looking down into a large, dark, arched opening in the ground, which appears to be a confined space. The scene is outdoors under a clear blue sky.

By Spc. Robert Havens
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Tight spaces and unstable surfaces can make for a dangerous environment, which is why the proper training is important for the rescue teams of the Nebraska National Guard's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives Enhanced Response Force Package, or CERFP. The Soldiers practiced search and rescue drills using the rubble pile to hone their skills at Vigilant Guard 2014, hosted by the Kansas National Guard, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4-7.

As with anything, these skills take time to develop.

"We're out here teaching the CBRNE elements in the five disciplines of rescue which are shoring, breaching and braking, ropes, lifting and hauling and some of the medical element," said Ronnie Sallee, subject matter expert and rescue technician with Response International Group. "A lot of these service members have been through the basic rigging class in Oklahoma City and this allows them to put that to use."

This particular exercise focused on confined space rescue.

"Confined space rescue is one of the most realistic situations that we might have to do in an actual CERFP event," said Staff Sgt. Reggie Barent, search and extraction second team squad leader, Firefighting Team, Nebraska National Guard CERFP. "Anytime someone gets below grade, there's a good chance the air quality is not good, so we need to make sure we monitor that when we are working to get someone down there to them."

The rescue team must learn how to set up a stable tripod atop a very unstable surface when lowering a rescuer into the confined space. One misstep and the rescuer becomes the next victim.

In situations like this you can never be too prepared.

"The more training that we do, the better it will allow us to respond to an actual event," said Barent. "When things go bad, you always fall back on the training that you've had."

"It's a great training venue, and anytime we get to come out here to use our training equipment we only get better," concluded Barent.

Serving up morale

By Capt. Kevin Anderson
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

"They say that in the Army, the coffee is mighty fine." "Who said that?" "It looks like muddy water and tastes like turpentine," a classic Army marching cadence states, which most members of the Kansas National Guard have probably heard at one point or another.

Without a doubt, whatever coffee the cadence was based on, their morning joe was not coming from the dining facility located at Company B, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, Salina, Kansas, during Vigilant Guard 2014.

"The DFAC coffee is certainly one of the highlights during my day," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jason Garr, the tactical operations officer for the 35th Infantry Division. "Coffee is certainly necessary during these training exercises, but it is great that the DFAC also offers cold drinks because of the recent heat."

The DFAC worked hard to bring Soldiers and Airmen of the Vigilant Guard exercise quality meals each day.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Brissett, 169th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion,

Olathe, Kansas, was one of the senior noncommissioned officers that helped bring quality meals to the Soldiers.

Brissett said that his Soldiers were up at 4 a.m. to start cooking breakfast for Soldiers who began to amble into the DFAC around 6 a.m., before conducting their emergency management training.

After breakfast was finished, Brissett's Soldiers were given a few hours of down time, but were back at 1 p.m. to start prepping for dinner.

While Brissett was restricted to a scheduled, 14-day meal rotation, he made it clear that "the Soldiers certainly enhanced" the meals for flavor to provide tasty nutrition.

All of the Soldiers, including Brissett, are food service specialists, or military occupational specialty 92Gs. According to www.goarmy.com, all 92G Soldiers can bake, fry, braise, boil, simmer, steam and sauté Army recipes. Moreover, MOS qualified Soldiers can maintain all kitchen equipment and maintain all field kitchen equipment. One Soldier in particular, Spc. Amanda Hrabe, food service specialist, 995th Maintenance Company, has used her skills from the Army in her civilian career.

Hrabe is a chef at Olive Garden in Salina, where she regularly uses the skills that she learned during food service

specialist school. She said that before she entered the Kansas National Guard she always enjoyed cooking and becoming a food service specialist was a natural fit. Hrabe has also brought many lessons learned from working in a national restaurant chain to benefit the operations of the Kansas National Guard.

Over the course of the exercise, the DFAC in Salina served more than 5,000 A Rations, standard Army meals, and over 2,800 Meals, Ready-to-Eat. MREs have long been a contentious issue with Soldiers, mostly because of the taste and lack of variety for meal options. There has historically been a larger perception throughout the Army that MREs are unappetizing, it is a history that is being directly addressed, Army wide.

According to the Meal, Ready-to-Eat website (www.mreinfo.com), the menu has expanded from 12 items to 24 entrees, and 70 new items have been added. The menu options have become quite varied, ranging from classic chili and macaroni to southwest beef and black beans.

"The older MREs really didn't have much flavor," said Spc. Anna Laurin, print journalist with the 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. "There is much more variety now and all of the meals taste better than they used to."

Sgt. Zachary Sheely, print journalist with the 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Kansas Army National Guard, awaits breakfast Aug. 5 during Vigilant Guard 2014, an emergency response exercise hosted by the Kansas National Guard at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4-7. Pvt. Ruben Gonzalez of the 1st Battalion, 376th Aviation, Nebraska National Guard, Spc. Amanda Hrabe of the 995th Maintenance Company, Kansas National Guard, and Spc. Joline Georgiana of the 1st Battalion, 376th Aviation Regiment, Nebraska National Guard, serve Soldiers breakfast before training begins during the Vigilant Guard exercise. *Photo by Capt. Kevin Anderson, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*



Ground ambulance company ready for emergencies at Vigilant Guard

By Capt. Benjamin Gruver
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Snake bite? No problem. The 1077th Ground Ambulance Company of the Kansas Army National Guard knows what to do.

Snake bites were one of many injuries the Olathe-based unit prepared for while in support of Vigilant Guard 2014, a multi-state emergency response exercise hosted by Kansas at the Great Plains Joint Training Center, Salina, Kansas.

"The first thing we would do is verify there was a snake bite," said Sgt. Justin Goff, a medic with the 1077th Ground Ambulance Company, explaining that if a bite occurred they would first check for puncture holes and venom spewing out.

"After that, we identify what kind of snake it is, so we can know what kind of treatment and anti-venom serum to use," said Goff. "Then, we are going to load and take them to whatever facility can handle their snake bite the best. The anti-venom is basically the only thing that is going to help them out, so we just try and regulate their body temperature, but not actually put anything on the wound because it could infect it or cause further damage."

The chances for a snake bite are rare, but aren't unheard of and have occurred on the GPJTC as recently as last year, when a Kansas officer candidate was bitten prior to the land navigation course.

According to Capt. Kyrie Ritzdorf, a physician assistant with the KSARNG Medical Detachment, her understanding is that the officer candidate ignored the bite and completed the exercise before realizing it was a serious issue.



An M997 ground ambulance stands ready for action during Vigilant Guard 2014, a multi-state emergency response exercise hosted by Kansas. The 1077th Ground Ambulance Company out of Olathe, Kansas, had seven ambulances on hand both participating in the exercise and ready for real world emergencies. Photo by Capt. Benjamin Gruver, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

"He was sent to the hospital and treated in a step-down ICU for three days," said Ritzdorf, explaining that it took multiple vials of anti-venom to treat the patient. "If this is untreated, it can kill people and it isn't something that should be ignored."

The ambulances played an important role in identifying and providing initial care of not only snake bites, but also heat injuries, fractures and head injuries, or if someone is having chest pains.

"The Ground Ambulance Company has the equipment needed to do vital signs immediately that lets us know if we need to give them glucose right now because their blood sugar is too low, or if somebody is having chest pains, to see if this is something that needs to be transported out immediately," said Ritzdorf.

Two of the seven ambulances on hand at the exercise from the unit

were used to stand ready for real-world emergencies during the exercise, augmenting two civilian ambulances, while a host of military personnel and emergency responders from across the region participated in the exercise.

The 1077th Ground Ambulance Company also had assets participating in Vigilant Guard, delivering patients to the Kansas Air National Guard Expeditionary Medical Support system as casualties were simulated as the exercise went along.

"It gives us a chance to have more time to work together," said Capt. James Marshall, commander of the 1077th Ground Ambulance Company. "It gives us more time than what we do on the weekend where you only have so much time. We can go from patient assessments to the ambulance to the handoff and getting a report to the hospital as we hand them off so we can work that all at once."



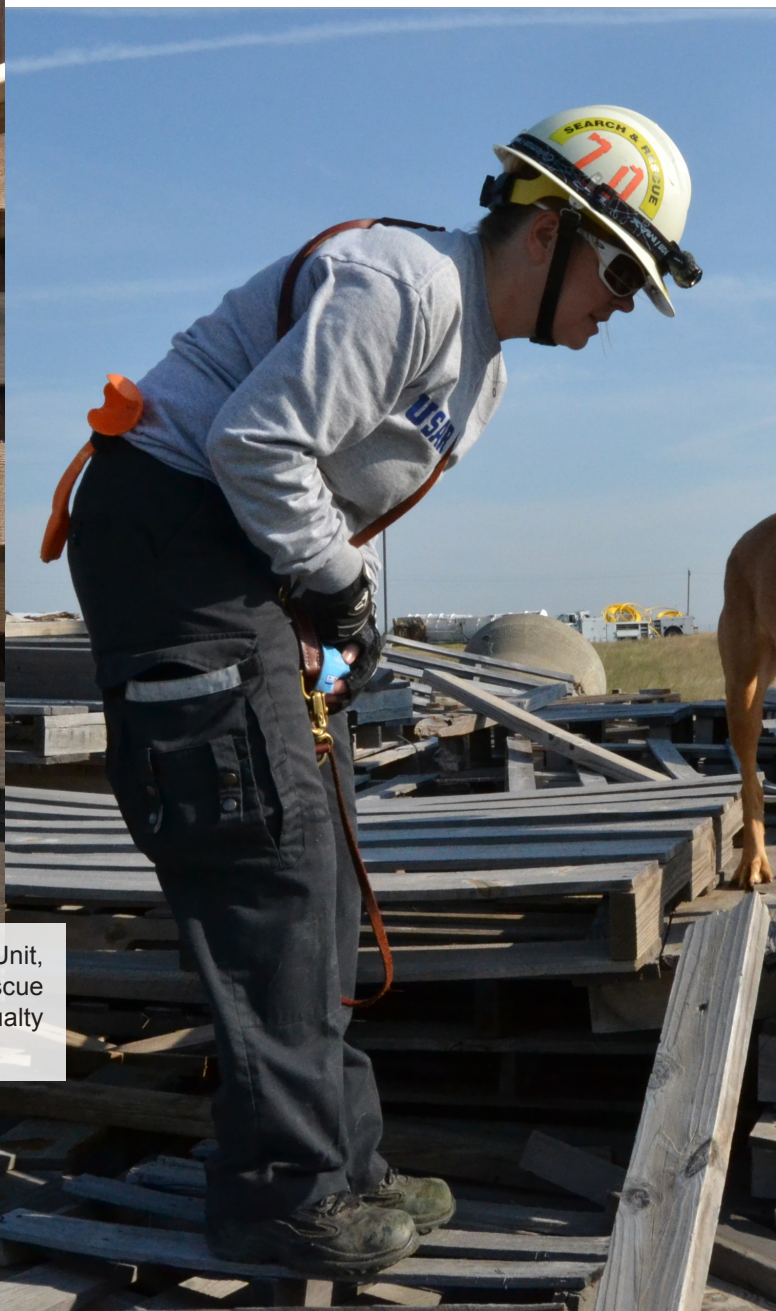
Canine search and rescue

*Man's best friend
training to save lives*

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Margaret Ziffer
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Heather Swift, Kansas Task Force Canine Unit, rewards Daisy, a 4-year-old search and rescue Labrador retriever, for successfully locating a casualty in a pile of debris as part of Vigilant Guard 2014.



When disaster hits and people go missing, sometimes search and rescue teams could use an extra hand. Or in this case, an extra nose.

Daisy, a 4-year-old search and rescue Labrador retriever, barks to alert her handler, Heather Swift of the Kansas Task Force Canine Unit, that she has found a casualty in a pile of debris.



Handler and Training Coordinator Heather Jones talked enthusiastically about her work over the sound of barking dogs. Behind her, Daisy, a 10-month-old Labrador retriever, was obviously anxious to get to work.

Jones and Daisy are members of the Kansas Task Force Canine Unit, a non-profit organization comprised of volunteers dedicated to the search and rescue of missing persons. They provide highly trained canine search and rescue services to local response agencies across Kansas. They were at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, to train as part of Kansas' multi-agency emergency preparedness exercise, Vigilant Guard 2014, hosted by the Kansas National Guard, Aug. 4-7.

Even though they volunteer, sometimes handlers can put in 20, 30 or even 40 hours a week to train with their dogs. "We call it our unpaid job," joked the team members.

Jones and her own dog, a Dutch shepherd named Brock, are seasoned volunteers. They were called up five times in 2011 for real search and rescue missions. At five years old, Jones says Brock has already experienced more real-life searches than most dogs will see in a full career lasting 10-12 years.

"[The dogs] wouldn't do it if they didn't love it," Jones said. "What we ask them to do is hard and it's scary. We fly them in helicopters, put them on ropes, all sorts of crazy stuff. ... We enjoy getting called out, we get excited. Mostly, they do it for a paycheck, which, for all the dogs here today, is a toy."

Volunteer victims role playing in the exercise were instructed to hide with a toy and wait to be found. The dog had to bark five or six times upon discovery of a victim in order to alert the handler. Then, the dog got a few minutes of play time as a reward. The dogs stay motivated to search because they are trained to assume that every person on the pile, whether it's a simulation, a practice or an actual disaster, will have a toy.

As Daisy excitedly combed the pallets for mock victims, Dave Meek, a volunteer dog handler with the Kansas Task Force Canine Unit, remained on top of the mound of pallets. Acting as the training exercise safety specialist, he provided oversight of the entire area.

He emphasized having someone "monitor the condition of the area we're searching with the canines. That person can sometimes see the dog when the handler can't."

Meek has been with the organization for more than 20 years helping train dogs to become certified in areas like wilderness and disaster searches. His newest partner, Wiley, a 3-year-old border collie, is working to get certified on collapsed structures.

One of the challenges the volunteer-based organization faces is numbers, Jones acknowledged.

"The hard thing for us is we currently have five operational dogs on our team," she said. "Hopefully we will be adding a few more to the ranks here quickly, but there are a gazillion guys who are tech search [certified], so they are bringing in fresh crews constantly. These guys, the dogs, it's not common for them to work 16-18 hours per day. They are a limited resource."

Though they only participate in joint-agency training opportunities like Vigilant Guard once or twice a year, the canine unit tries to conduct training exercises at Crisis City every four to six weeks on their own.

Last May, the Kansas Task Force Canine Unit hosted an open training event at Crisis City, which received participation from volunteers and FEMA units from six states. They plan to host another training event incorporating the New York Police Department and several more states in November.

Because training facilities like Crisis City provide a unique, realistic training environment, interest in the facility has been growing, and canine units are helping raise awareness. Jones said, "If you want Crisis City on the map, use canines."

As far as joint training with National Guard Units, she added, "we'd like to do more of it. [Guard] guys are always there and are a great resource for us."

Kansas explores **SPACE OPERATIONS**

By Capt. Benjamin Gruver
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

“Space, the final frontier,” the *Star Trek* intro might not be a mantra too far-fetched in today’s world as the Army incorporates more and more of its space capabilities into its operations, including domestic emergency response.

The Kansas Army National Guard tested the use of space operations during the multistate emergency response exercise Vigilant Guard 2014.

“Space operations and the capabilities that we normally bring to wartime are fairly new to the domestic operations realm for Kansas,” said Lt. Col. Eric Bishop, chief of the Space Support Element for the 35th Infantry Division.

That capability essentially was satellite and geospatial imaging with a gamut of software programs used to provide data quickly so leaders can determine solutions to problems.

To augment Kansas’ small contingent of three personnel was Army Space Support Team 30 of the 117th Space Support Battalion from the Colorado National Guard, a unit unique to Colorado.

“They have a lot more experience than we have,” said Bishop. “We are still learning, so having them with their expertise is a great opportunity.”

The Colorado team, consisting of two space operations officers, two geospatial engineers, a satellite communications systems operator/maintainer and information technology specialist, was able to bring a new dynamic to an area of the exercise that can only be simulated.

“We are able to define the situation and help our domestic operations and civil authorities by providing them information that before this exercise Kansas had not been able to do,” said Bishop.

One way the ASST was able to help was to use real world terrain of the Neosho River and do analysis of the flooding at different stages.

“They are able to look at the computer and, given the stage level, could tell you exactly whether this house would be



Capt. Jennifer Staton, a space operations officer, Sgt. Cassandra Quinones and Pvt. 1st Class Miranda Yost, geospatial engineers, use mapping software during the multi-state emergency response exercise Vigilant Guard 2014, hosted by the Kansas National Guard in Salina, Kansas. The Soldiers are a part of Army Space Support Team 30 of the 117th Space Support Battalion with the Colorado National Guard. *Photo by Capt. Benjamin Gruver, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

flooded or this bridge would be under water,” said Bishop.

During the exercise, planners were asking for specific locations of service members and trying to determine which areas could safely be managed by local emergency responders and which needed guardsmen to support the worst hit locations.

The benefit of using space technologies, according to Capt. Kevin Trabert, the team leader for ASST 30, is that the information can be provided quickly from a safe location.

In addition to the flooding, the team was able to simulate the plume from a leak at a chemical plant and show areas directly impacted and in need of evacuation. The information and products the ASST was able to provide enhanced the areas of the exercise that were difficult to simulate.

“There is no real way to simulate what a destroyed city is going to look like from a tornado unless we use an example from recent history,” said Trabert. “So the way we’ve been kind of doing that is with a lot of extras on the map to make it look

like the areas are damaged to try to bring some of that exercise to the real world.”

The ASST enhanced the Vigilant Guard exercise and brought along their real experience in using space technologies in emergency response operations.

“In Colorado, we supported the Black Forest fire last summer, which was a very large fire on the outskirts of Colorado Springs,” said Trabert, explaining that it was one of the largest evacuations in Colorado history with almost 30,000 people evacuated at one point.

ASST 30 was able to provide imagery of the fire and used satellite sensors to pick up heat energy to show exactly where the fire was. They also were able to integrate that with the Blue Force Tracking system military forces use overseas to track emergency responders.

“We really appreciate using the ASST,” said Bishop. “They were a huge asset during Vigilant Guard, bringing with them the experience of having already responded in that role to other domestic emergencies.”

Showers and clean uniforms: Supporting Soldiers during training

By 1st Lt. Margaret Ziffer
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A Soldier flopped down victoriously on top of a gigantic tent he had just finished folding – a small celebration over having accomplished a not-so-small task. First Platoon, 1013th Quartermaster Reserve Company, Nebraska National Guard, North Platte, Nebraska, was packing up to head home.

Led by 1st Lt. Tyler Plasencio, 13 Soldiers were about to head back to Nebraska after spending a week participating in Vigilant Guard 2014.

Their mission? “We’re here to support,” said Plasencio.

Using a Laundry Advance System, he and his Soldiers provided laundry access and showers to fellow Soldiers participating in Vigilant Guard 2014.

LADS operator Spc. Raymond Bringewatt explained that the LADS recycles most of the water, so it ends up really only producing 20 gallons of wastewater per day. The two-time combat veteran has been working with the LADS for six years.

“It’s a pretty impressive machine,” said Bringewatt. “I’ve nowhere near mastered it. I would say I’m proficient ... and that’s taken me the whole six years.”

Bringewatt also holds two additional military occupational specialties: Mechanic and truck driver, which gives him a unique and complimentary skill set.

“I can haul it to where it needs to go, once it gets there I can set it up, and if it

breaks, I can fix it,” he joked.

Having served as a transportation officer before joining the 1013th Quartermaster Reserve Company last March, this was Plasencio’s first opportunity to participate in a LADS operation on this scale.

“It’s a small setup, but there are a lot of moving parts,” said Plasencio. “It was a big learning experience for me – it’s certainly different [from a transportation unit], but this was a lot of fun. Coming out here with these guys has been great. It’s a bonding experience.”

When the unit returned home, they anticipated being called into action to utilize their newly polished skills by assisting local organizations like The

Salvation Army.

“It’s a pretty young unit, so now they will have had hands-on experience, and they will get to bring what they learned here back to their peers at the unit and hopefully the knowledge will spread out, and as a whole, the company will become stronger,” said Plasencio.

He added that the unit didn’t hesitate when asked to extend the operating hours in an effort to accommodate all the Soldiers who were working late. And the long hours paid off in the form of thank yous and barbecue invitations from grateful Soldiers.

“Sometimes it’s something that’s taken for granted, but not out here. It was definitely appreciated.”



Pvt. Dewayne Endecott, 1013th Quartermaster Reserve Company, Nebraska National Guard, North Platte, Nebraska, finds a convenient storage location inside one of the Laundry Advance Systems while packing up to return home from Vigilant Guard 2014, Aug. 6. Photo by 1st Lt. Margaret Ziffer, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



National Guardsmen of the 1013th Quartermaster Reserve Company, North Platte, Nebraska, take a break from loading up the Laundry Advance System before returning home from Vigilant Guard 2014, Aug. 6. Photo by 1st Lt. Margaret Ziffer, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FEELING SECURE

By Spc. Robert Havens
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Emergency responders from military and civilian organizations came together to practice medical evacuations during Vigilant Guard 2014, a multi-state large-scale, natural disaster emergency response exercise hosted by the Kansas National Guard, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4-7.

"Helicopters in both the military and civilian world are a key piece in moving patients in need of immediate care to initial care facilities," said Terry L. David, Merge Major Emergency Response Group and commander, Kansas EMS Disaster Group. "This allows for a quicker manner than you can do with actual ground ambulances."

"This exercise allows us to fine-tune things we need to know," said David. "It is our first exercise we've done with the military and one of the objectives is to see just how well these entities work together and thus far has worked very well."

That's not to say that the military and civilian groups do not have to work at the ability to complete missions together.

Military aircraft in the state of Kansas do have the ability to talk on the state 800 megahertz radio system, but other states have had to reprogram their frequencies, or get additional radios, in order to talk to civilian entities, explained David.

But there is a lot of experience and work to ensure that exercises are successful and beneficial to both parties.

"People should be confident in the fact that there is a medical operations team that is well established and has been on five deployments," said David. "Because of this, the air medical part of this has worked very well in past real-life disasters."

Making military units work together can be difficult, and often it takes knowledge of both to be successful.

"In the National Guard, we are both civilians and military members, so in the civilian world, I am a physician in Des Moines, Iowa," said Lt. Col. Jim Duong, commander, Expeditionary Medical Support System. "This allows me to see what a civilian can do, as well as the military aspect of it."

In exercises like Vigilant Guard, when the civilian hospitals are being overwhelmed with casualties, the military can step forward and help triage those patients, Duong explained.

"Local hospitals have their own helicopters, and they're limited by the number of helicopters they have in an emergency situation," he said. "So just like the emergency rooms and hospitals can only handle a certain number of patients, the helicopters can only handle so many medevacs."

"Military aircraft can call up any number of hospitals and respond to any number of places and decide on a proper destination," said Duong. "This is a force multiplier that allows us to link all the region's hospitals and make them more capable. Training between the Army and Air allow us a better understanding of what the military can do, so we can better hit the ground running."



Members of D Company, 1st Battalion, 376th Aviation Regiment out of Grand Island, Nebraska, load a patient into a Lakota helicopter for mock patient transportation on Aug. 6, 2014, at Vigilant Guard hosted by Kansas, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas. Vigilant Guard, a multi-state emergency response exercise, helped demonstrate the importance of cooperation between states is vital in large-scale emergency situations. *Photo by Spc. Robert Havens, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

FROM OVERHEAD



Staff Sgt. Richard Shearer, crew chief with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Security and Support Battalion, 376th Aviation Regiment, Nebraska National Guard prepares a UH-72 Lakota helicopter before taking off for a fly over at Vigilant Guard 2014, with Maj. Gen. Michael D. Navrkal, commander of the 35th Infantry Division, Kansas Army National Guard. The Lakota helicopters are used to collect real-time imagery of a selected location and send it back to a command that requested the data.

Photo by Spc. Anna Laurin, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

By Spc. Anna Laurin
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

When a disaster occurs and leaders need to know what the area looks like, they are able to call up distinctive help, like the UH-72 Lakota helicopters of the 1st Security and Support Battalion, 376th Aviation Regiment, Nebraska National Guard.

At Vigilant Guard 2014, hosted by the Kansas National Guard, the teams were able to show off their unique capabilities to Maj. Gen. Michael D. Navrkal, commander of the 35th Infantry Division, Kansas Army National Guard, Aug. 6.

"As part of the exercise, the 35th Infantry Division is providing the Joint Task Force headquarters," said Navrkal. "In domestic response, it is always good to have situational understanding of what's going on out there and these unique aircraft provide some tremendous capabilities for us."

The large-scale exercise allowed many opportunities for interactions between both military and civilian entities.

"Historically, we train for a war-time mission, but this gives us the opportunity to plan for domestic support to civilian authorities," said Navrkal. "This gives us the ability to look at our systems and processes and how we would adapt those to working with the civilian responders and others agencies."

Integrating with other agencies is beneficial on all sides. The crew members of the 1st SS Battalion, 376th Aviation Regiment found the exercise very valuable to their mission.

"The security and support battalion's role is primarily domestic operations," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jeff Caniglia, battalion standardization instructor pilot, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st SS Battalion, 376th Aviation Regiment. "Anytime that we can come out and actually do the mission that we were created for, it's a huge advantage. We do individual training, but when we can do collective training at this level, it's amazing for us."

The Lakota helicopters provide immediate information that help leaders in a disaster emergency response map out damage.

"Anytime there are floods, tornadoes, or any time that a joint operation center or a higher command needs real time imagery, we are going to put that aircraft on station overhead as an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platform collecting the live-time imagery and pushing it back for information," said Caniglia.

He explained how the helicopters uses FLIR thermal heat sensors to view bodies within a rubble pile.

"We have folks on the ground working through the debris and rubble ... and if we see victims, with the heat sensor, we can guide the ground guys to find the victims," said Caniglia.

Working closely with a division as well as supporting local first responders keeps the Lakota teams motivated.

"They have worked really hard," said Caniglia. "We are in the field, temperatures have been extremely hot, but the crews' enthusiasm has been extremely high ... they are doing the jobs that we train to do all year ... now we get to execute those missions."

Security forces maintain order after simulated disaster



A role-playing Soldier with the 35th Military Police Company, attempts to evade an Airman with the 184th Security Forces Squadron during Vigilant Guard training exercise on Aug. 5. The Kansas Army and Air National Guard joined forces to train together during Vigilant Guard, a multi-state, joint emergency response exercise hosted by the Kansas National Guard at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4-7. Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Aim High to become an Army of One. That's the mentality of the Soldiers of the 35th Military Police Company and the Airmen of the 184th and 190th Security Forces Squadrons, while training together during Vigilant Guard 2014.

According to Air Force Staff Sgt. Walter Clayton, unit training manager with the 184th, training alongside the Army is a great learning experience for both sides.

"We're able to incorporate our different perspectives on how to conduct business during this exercise," said Clayton. "To borrow their slogan, 'An Army of One,' we aim to become one cohesive unit, which is paramount in what we do."

The overall scenario during Vigilant Guard 2014 involved catastrophic damage and chaos caused by massive, simulated tornadoes, to test the capabilities of various first responder elements throughout the region, both military and civilian.

The simulated fallout ultimately forced citizens from their homes and provided ample opportunity for subsequent looters.

The security elements were called upon to secure the area and to react as they would in an actual disaster via foot patrols and quick reaction forces,

Support Soldiers from the 35th MP Company played the role of the scofflaws, and it was left to the Soldiers and Airmen of the 35th, 184th and 190th to react and respond, using appropriate, but minimal force in an effort to maintain order and establish community rapport, Clayton explained. Their ultimate mission in an actual emergency is to protect people and property.

"We evaluate and initiate scenarios that the Soldiers and Airmen go through," said Army Sgt. Justin Hawks, team lead with 35th MP. "We try to initiate our scenario to provide a realistic experience for these guys."

Realistic experience that can't necessarily be gleaned in a class room, Army Spc. Eric Ward, military policeman with the 35th noted.

"I've never experienced training like this," Ward said. "It's one thing to talk about what you would do in a classroom. Getting out and doing it is another thing ...

it is an adrenaline rush."

Air Force Master Sgt. Jared Nickel, team lead with the 184th, believes that getting those jitters out of the way, and ironing out the wrinkles of working in a joint environment is a great benefit.

"Integration with their Army counterparts is a new experience for a lot of the younger Airmen," said Nickel, an 18-year security forces veteran. "This training is invaluable in preparing the troops in an actual training area, as opposed to learning in a classroom environment, and increases our potential and preparedness immensely in responding to an actual emergency."

Some of the role players took their job of causing havoc and stress for the security forces seriously, relentlessly rushing the area in an effort to evade them and penetrate the area of operation, sometimes blurring the lines of role playing and reality, but that's the name of the game, Army Spc. Brandt Cessna, generator mechanic with the 35th, explained.

"I try to be as realistic as possible, safely," Cessna said.

73rd Civil Support Team tests capabilities

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Nineteen members of the 73rd Civil Support Team, Kansas National Guard, spent Aug. 4-7 participating in Vigilant Guard 2014, a multi-state disaster response exercise sponsored by U.S. Northern Command and the National Guard Bureau, organized to test the capability of emergency response agencies at all levels of government, both military and civil.

The scenario of the exercise was the response to a prevalent and all-too real threat to the state of Kansas — a simulated, destructive tornado.

“Our role here at Vigilant Guard is site categorization of the damage done by a tornado,” said Maj. Robert Cole, commander of the 73rd CST. “We’re here to be the eyes and ears of other first responders to set the stage, so that we can help the people of Kansas in our most likely threat, which is a tornado.”

The 73rd, headquartered in Topeka, is comprised of Soldiers and Airmen and is generally called upon to assist local, state and national civil authorities during a chemical, radiological or nuclear event in identifying unknown chemical agents after a man-made or natural disaster has occurred.

Utilizing the Crisis City facility at the Great Plains Joint Training Center near Salina, the 73rd was able to integrate with their first-responder counterparts from across Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VII, as well as civilian authorities during the training exercise.

A civil support team is the only government or civilian first responder operation of its kind, designated specifically for site categorization and chemical identification, according to 1st Sgt. Greg Johnson, first sergeant of the 73rd.

Johnson noted that the CST is distinctive not only in its capabilities but also its response time from home to their duty location.

“We’re on call 24/7 and required to report within 90 minutes,” he said. “We’ve got three hours to deploy to a crisis

situation when called, no matter the time.”

Cole acknowledged the value of the Vigilant Guard exercise to his troops in the joint environment provided.

“It’s been really exciting working with the units out of Nebraska and Missouri, and understanding how we fit in with them,” he said. “We’ve learned a

ton of lessons in the short time we’ve been working with them.”

To Spc. Shawn Burns, survey team member, 73rd CST and relatively new member of the team, the benefit of this training is immeasurable.

“I’ve loved it,” he said. “It’s been absolutely awesome.”



A member of the 73rd Civil Support Team checks a simulated collapsed building for the presence of hazardous chemical, radiological or biological materials during the Vigilant Guard exercise at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4-7. The mission of the 73rd CST is to assist local, state and national civil authorities during a chemical, radiological or nuclear event in identifying unknown chemical agents after a man-made or natural disaster. Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Members of the 73rd Civil Support Team identify a possible hazardous chemical extracted from a simulated collapsed building during the Vigilant Guard exercise at Crisis City. Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Members of the 735th Field Service Company, Missouri National Guard, assess a victim's health at Vigilant Guard 2014 hosted by the Kansas National Guard, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas. Vigilant Guard is a large-scale, natural disaster exercise testing multiple entities of FEMA Region VII, Aug. 4-7.

Interoperability prevalent during Vigilant Guard

Stories and photos by Spc. Robert Havens
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Emergency preparedness agencies from across the region conducted a search and rescue operation during Vigilant Guard 2014 hosted by the Kansas National Guard.

“With this particular exercise, troops are providing specific response to tornadoes,” said Sgt. 1st Class Lee Given, with the Joint Interagency Training Education Center and West Virginia National Guard.

JITEC representatives observe and collect data regarding the exercise to provide to Northern Command and National Guard Bureau, the sponsors of the exercise.

The exercise scenario involved tornadoes hitting Emporia, Junction City, Ogden, Manhattan and Salina. Training exercises like this help participants become more familiar with what they will face in the real world.

“While conducting the drill, participants are looking for different types of chemical contaminants, such as asbestos, gas or other chemicals that we may come across,” said Given. “The role players need to be careful with what they come in contact with.”

In addition to simulated dangers, role players also faced real-world safety issues and had to make sure they were wearing personal protective equipment and were prepared to work in the heat, Given said.

Members of the 735th Field Service Company, Missouri Army National Guard, call for survivors during a mock exercise at Vigilant Guard 2014 hosted by the Kansas National Guard, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4-7.



(left) Spc. Adam DeClue, of the 735th Field Service Company, Missouri Army National Guard, searches a damaged building for simulated victims following a mock tornado as part of Vigilant Guard 2014. (below) Servicemembers of the 735th Field Service Company, Missouri Army National Guard, prepare a victim during a mock disaster at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, at Vigilant Guard 2014, a large-scale, natural disaster exercise testing multiple entities of FEMA Region VII, Aug. 4-7.

Missions like this require a lot of readiness and prior training to be ready for the worst.

“With this mission, we have to be ready to go at the drop of a dime,” said Sgt. Nadia Porter, 735th Field Service Company, Missouri Army National Guard, Rolla, Missouri. “When we get the call, we have to be ready to go, so we are always packed up and ready. We cannot predict a natural disaster.”

Overall, many of the Soldiers participating in the exercise believe that the first day of training proved beneficial.

“The company I am with, 735th FSC, this is a great opportunity to have this mission,” said Porter. “It’s really brought us closer, and it has tested our ability to learn.”



35TH INFANTRY DIVISION

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Joint Task Force Santa Fe leads suc- cessful military operations during Vigilant Guard

By Capt. Michael Sullivan
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

More than 2,000 local, state and federal personnel trained at various locations throughout the state as part of Vigilant Guard 2014, hosted by the Kansas National Guard at Crisis City in Salina, Kansas, from Aug. 4-7.

Joint Task Force Santa Fe, which was primarily comprised of service members from the Kansas National Guard's 35th Infantry Division and the 190th Air Refueling Wing, managed Vigilant Guard's military assets, which included hundreds of National Guard and Reserve servicemembers, primarily from Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma. JTF Santa Fe helped coordinate disaster relief efforts in a variety of simulated scenarios including tornadoes, flooding and collapsed buildings.

According to Col. Russell Richardson, operations officer of JTF Santa Fe and the 35th Infantry Division, this is the first time a Joint Task Force has been set up in an incident command and all-hazards environment in the state of Kansas.

"This is truly a joint environment that goes across states," said Richardson.

"If there is an incident that occurs, we have emergency management compacts with our adjoining states and partners so that when something occurs and they need help, we respond to help them out when they have an incident. It works the same way with us. ... It is a very good environment with this, so we build our relationships with these states and units."

Richardson feels that Vigilant Guard is an ideal learning environment that allows the personnel involved to practice their skills so that Kansas National Guard is fully prepared when called upon to help when disaster really strikes.

"At the end of the day, that is really the whole purpose of this training," said Richardson. "So when an actual tornado, flooding event or blizzard or some hazard that occurs, we can go out there and execute. That is why we do exercises like this. We prepare, we identify what works, we identify what we need to fix, and then we train and we prepare again."

Brig. Gen. Robert E. Windham Jr., dual status commander of JTF Santa Fe and the Kansas Army National Guard Land Component, called the exercise "a great leap forward," and the joint work between emergency management,

homeland security and the Kansas National Guard has gone beyond what was written down as mission plans on paper.

"If called upon, (the division) can much more rapidly get to a state of being a Joint Task Force and do that competently and much more quickly," said Windham. "I think it has shaved off a great deal of time it will take for the division to hit the ground and be fully functioning."

Windham said he was pleased with the positive attention Vigilant Guard received with the public, but publicity was not what the exercise is about. It was about the service members in the state and making sure the Kansas National Guard is ready to respond when the citizens of Kansas need them.

"This is not a commercial about the Kansas National Guard," said Windham. "This is truly the Guard doing what the Guard does best. It is really relevant. We do it right here and you do it for your neighbors. I look at young Soldiers and Airmen ... it's been really hot and humid and they have been at some of these venues all day working hard, and they are going to talk about this. When they go back to work, they have something to brag about. Other young people will hear that message, and they will want some of that action."



Armenian delegate meets with Kansas Army National Guard

By Master Sgt. Brent Anders
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The First Deputy Minister of Defense of Armenia, David Tonoyan, met with senior noncommissioned officer leadership and Officer Candidate School representatives to discuss ongoing educational missions within the state partnership program on Aug. 6.

At the meeting, Tonoyan received a briefing on how OCS and Warrant Officer Candidate Schools train their Soldiers. A second briefing was provided detailing how a special Kansas National Guard NCO development team would present information to the Armenian NCO academy students during an educational mission to Armenia in September 2014.

During this workshop, Soldiers will gain valuable knowledge and experience on how to train and lead other soldiers. This special NCO development workshop mission is part of an ongoing effort to assist Armenia as they continue to enhance their utilization and empowerment of sergeants within their Army.

When asked about the biggest difference between Armenian and U.S. military training, Tonoyan stated, "we lack knowledge and experience on how

to best do this. We want to be more aggressive in our training."

Tonoyan also said he appreciated how previous NCO development teams have been using new instructional techniques to develop soldiers' ability to think and process information, instead of using old lecturing styles of presenting classes.

In discussing what the hardest challenges are in developing Armenian NCOs, Tonoyan said "Culture change for the Army to understand the place of the sergeant. Also the cultural difference between the conscripted versus the professional sergeant."

Unlike the U.S. military's all-volunteer force, Armenia still uses mandatory conscription. All males of legal age (barring any medical conditions or conscientious objection) must serve for at least two years within the Armenian military.

During Tonoyan's visit, he observed various National Guard training including Vigilant Guard and met with Kansas Governor Sam Brownback.

"I enjoyed talking with the governor, we had a great discussion," said Tonoyan. "We Armenians love working with the Kansas National Guard. It is a great open relationship that is providing us with lots of help."



First Deputy Minister of Defense of Armenia, David Tonoyan (far left) listens as Lt. Col. John Clark (far right) commander of the Officer Candidate School and Warrant Officer Candidate School, 1st Battalion, 235th Regiment, Kansas Army National Guard, describes how officer training is conducted in the United States, Aug. 6, in Salina, Kansas. Photo by Master Sgt. Brent Anders, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The Joint Task Force Santa Fe Tactical Operations Center was headquartered in a DRASH (Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter) provided by the 35th Infantry Division during Vigilant Guard 2014, hosted by the Kansas National Guard in Salina, Kansa, Aug. 4-7. Photo by Capt. Michael Sullivan, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



CHEMICAL SOLDIERS

gain valuable experience

By Spc. Anna Laurin

105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Sgt. Latoya Spence, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist, 3175th Chemical Company, St. Louis, helps a role player step into a clean set of coveralls after being cleared through the decontamination line as part of an exercise held at Vigilant Guard 2014, hosted by the Kansas National Guard, at Crisis City, Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4, 2014. *Photo by Spc. Anna Laurin, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*



Soldiers of the 3175th Chemical Company of the Missouri Army National Guard, St. Peters, Missouri, set up and practiced a decontamination service line Aug. 4 at Crisis City, Salina, as part of Vigilant Guard 2014.

The line was part of a collapsed building scenario in which a rubble pile was used to rescue victims, who were then taken through the decontamination lines as if the collapsed building contained various contaminants that may have leaked.

"We are reacting how we would actually react in a real-world situation," said 1st Lt. James Winfield, officer in charge of the decontamination element of the 3175th Chemical Company.

The Soldiers of the 3175th Chemical Company decontaminate patients who have been exposed to hazardous materials and pathogens.

"We are like a human car wash," said Winfield.

Although this situation was for practice, a lot of effort went into its preparation. The Vigilant Guard exercise allowed the 3175th to train in an isolated environment, but with the support of the medical and search and rescue elements.

"Up to this point, we have focused primarily on the physical set up of the line, the tents, the power and water sections," said Winfield. "This is our first big opportunity to actually operate the jobs, hands on with casualties on the line."

The Soldiers were able to use their training and see how each element of the scenario interacts.

"We get to see it all work together," said Staff Sgt. Anthony Haungs, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist, 3175th Chemical Company.

For most of these Soldiers, this was their first experience with a large-scale training scenario.

"It's a very young crew here and not a lot of experience, but they are showing a lot of effort and motivation," said Winfield. "They really want to learn."



Soldiers of the 3175th Chemical Company, Missouri Army National Guard, cut the clothing off a patient as part of the decontamination process during the Vigilant Guard 2014 exercise at Crisis City near Salina, Kansas, Aug. 4-7. For some of the Soldiers, the exercise was the first time they had the opportunity to use those skills in such a large-scale exercise. *Photo by Spc. Anna Laurin, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

A member of the 3157th Chemical Company, Missouri Army National Guard out of St. Louis, is monitored for chemical residue as he exits the decontamination site during Vigilant Guard 2014, Aug. 4. Photo by 1st Lt. Margaret Ziffer, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment





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